

# The Conscience Agenda

## Our Moral Imperative

### 1. Expanding A Slavery Remembrance Day:

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- To commemorate the lives of all those who suffered under slavery, one of the greatest crimes against humanity, while also condemning the act and perpetuation of that crime in the United States.
- Such a day of remembrance would prevent the evils of slavery from fading from our collective memory so as to prevent it from ever happening again.

### 2. Awarding A Congressional Gold Medal to the American Enslaved:

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- To honor the foundational mothers, fathers, and children whose lives were sacrificed to build a foundation for America's greatness.
- Just as the House honored Confederate soldiers in 1956 with a Congressional Gold Medal, it should honor those they sought to keep enslaved in at least the same way.

### 3. Removing The Name of Richard Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building:

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- To remove the name of a racist and self-proclaimed white supremacist from the tax-supported Russell Senate Office Building.

### 4. Enacting The Securities and Exchange Atonement Act:

- Page 15

- To investigate the extent of financial companies' historical connections to slavery and to facilitate atonement from those companies.

### 5. Establishing The Department of Reconciliation:

- Page 16

- To create a cabinet level Department of Reconciliation tasked with creating a national, comprehensive strategy to eliminate racism and invidious discrimination.
- This department would be designed to correct past, and prevent future transgressions against the Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, Female, LGBTQ, and other minority groups who face unjust discrimination and disadvantage.



THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 20, 2022

**Statement by President Joe Biden Marking Slavery Remembrance Day**

More than 400 years ago, twenty enslaved Africans were forcibly brought to the shores of what would become the United States. Millions more were stolen and sold in the centuries that followed, part of a system of slavery that is America's original sin.

Great nations don't hide from their history. They acknowledge their past, both the triumphs and the tragedies. Today is a day to reflect on the terrible toll of slavery, and on our nation's profound ability to heal and emerge stronger. Despite the horrors they faced, these men and women and their descendants have made countless contributions to the building of this nation and the continuous effort to realize the American ideal. I was honored last year to declare Juneteenth a national holiday, another moment to reflect and rededicate ourselves to becoming a more perfect union. And it's why my Administration will continue the hard, ongoing work to bring true equity and racial justice to our country.

I'm grateful for the efforts of Congress—in particular, Representative Al Green and Senator Elizabeth Warren—to recognize the significance of this day.

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White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA · 202-456-1111

# **Slavery Remembrance Day**

## **One Pager**

- This resolution, passed on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022, resolves to establish a Slavery Remembrance Day on August 20<sup>th</sup> each year:
  - Slavery Remembrance Day was acknowledged by President Biden in a press release in 2022.
  - Unlike 9/11, Pearl Harbor, and the Holocaust there is no Remembrance Day for Slavery.
  - August 20<sup>th</sup> was chosen to commemorate the day the first slave ship, the White Lion, arrived in the English-speaking American colonies at Point Comfort VA, near what is today called Norfolk exactly 402 years prior to August 20 2021.
  - Unlike Juneteenth, Slavery Remembrance Day is intended to be a day to commemorate the victims of slavery instead of celebrating its end.
- This resolution is endorsed by:
  - The National Action Network,
  - The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights,
  - Black Lives Matter of Houston,
  - The Antidefamation League,
  - The AFL-CIO,
  - J-Street.

# **H.Res.517 Slavery Remembrance Day is supported in Congress by**

Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Baldwin, Senator Blumenthal, Senator Booker, Senator Brown, Senator Cantwell, Senator Feinstein, Senator Markey, Senator Murray, Senator Klobuchar, Senator Smith, Rep. Barbara Lee, Rep. Alma Adams, Rep. Pete Aguilar, Rep. Steve Cohen, Rep. Colin Allred, Rep. Jake Auchincloss, Rep. Nanette Diaz Barragán, Rep. Karen Bass, Rep. Brendan Boyle, Rep. Joyce Beatty, Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, Rep. Jamaal Bowman, Rep. Anthony Brown, Rep. Earl Blumenauer, Rep. George Kenneth Butterfield, Jr., Rep. Tony Cárdenas, Rep. André Carson, Rep. Troy Carter, Rep. Kathy Castor, Rep. Joaquin Castro, Rep. Judy Chu, Rep. David Cicilline, Rep. Katherine Clark, Rep. Yvette D. Clarke, Rep. Steve Cohen, Rep. Jim Costa, Rep. Luis Correa, Rep. Emanuel Cleaver, Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman, Rep. Jim Cooper, Rep. Gerald E. Connolly, Rep. Henry Cuellar, Rep. Danny K. Davis, Rep. Suzan DelBene, Rep. Mark DeSaulnier, Rep. Lloyd Doggett, Rep. Adriano Espaillat, Rep. Veronica Escobar, Rep. Anna Eshoo, Rep. Dwight Evans, Rep. Leger Fernandez, Rep. Lois Frankel, Rep. Lizzie Fletcher, Rep. Bill Foster, Rep. Sylvia Garcia, Rep. Jesús G. “Chuy” García, Rep. Josh Gottheimer, Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva, Rep. Sara Jacobs, Rep. Steven Horsford, Rep. Jahana Hayes, Rep. Pramila Jayapal, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, Rep. Henry Johnson Jr., Rep. Jared Huffman, Rep. Mondaire Jones, Rep. Kaiali'i Kahele, Rep. Marcy Kaptur, Rep. Robin Kelly, Rep. Ro Khanna, Rep. Derek Kilmer, Rep. Ann McLane Kuster, Rep. Al Lawson, Rep. John B. Larson, Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, Rep. Andy Levin, Rep. Brenda Lawrence, Rep. Alan Lowenthal, Rep. Elaine Luria, Rep. Stephen Lynch, Rep. Doris Matsui, Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, Rep. A. Donald McEachin, Rep. Gregory W. Meeks, Rep. Grace Meng, Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, Rep. Kweisi Mfume, Rep. Kathy Manning, Rep. Betty McCollum, Rep. Gwen Moore, Rep. Joseph Morelle, Rep. Jerry Nadler, Rep. Joe Neguse, Rep. Marie Newman, Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Rep. Ilhan Omar, Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr., Rep. Chris Pappas, Rep. Bill Pascrell, Rep. Donald M. Payne, Jr., Rep. Ed Perlmutter, Rep. Ayanna Pressley, Rep. Mark Pocan, Rep. David E. Price, Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger, Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard, Rep. Jamie Raskin, Rep. Deborah Ross, Rep. Bobby L. Rush, Rep. John Sarbanes, Rep. Linda T. Sánchez, Rep. Terri Sewell, Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Rep. David Scott, Rep. Mary Scanlon, Rep. Albio Sires, Rep. Thomas R. Suozzi, Rep. Eric Swalwell, Rep. Darren Soto, Rep. Brad Sherman, Rep. Jackie Speier, Rep. Adam Schiff, Rep. Marilyn Strickland, Rep. Mark Takano, Rep. Lori Trahan, Rep. Norma J. Torres, Rep. David Trone, Rep. Bennie Thompson, Rep. Rashida Tlaib, Rep. Ritchie Torres, Rep. Paul Tonko, Rep. Dina Titus, Rep. Juan Vargas, Rep. Marc Veasey, Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez, Rep. Maxine Waters, Rep. Peter Welch, Rep. Nikema Williams, Rep. Frederica S. Wilson, and Rep. John Yarmuth.

# Congressman Al Green's Slavery

## Remembrance Day Program

Over the next few minutes, we will recall various well-documented aspects of the experiences of American slaves.

At the end of each of these summarized experiences I will say the words **'we must'**:

Immediately after I say, **'we must'** I would like you (**each of you**) to, in unison, say **'always remember'**.

**Let's begin.**

To prevent the evils of slavery from being repeated **we must:**  
**Always remember.**

To commemorate the suffering and the lives lost because of slavery **we must:**  
**Always remember.**

For the first 20 enslaved Africans who arrived in the British colonies at Point Comfort near what is now Norfolk, Virginia on August 20, 1619 **we must:**  
**Always remember.**

For the **12 million** humans from all walks of life whose lives were stolen from them when they were kidnapped from Africa **we must:**  
**Always remember.**

For the Africans sold into slavery by other Africans **we must:**  
**Always remember.**

For the **12 percent** of human beings who suffered the deadly middle passage and did not survive the horrific voyage to America **we must:**  
**Always remember.**

For the men, women, and children on slave ships, many of whom were kept naked, packed close together, with many shackled and chained **we must:**

**Always remember.**

For enslaved human beings who often worked from sunup to after sundown, **6 to 7** days a week, often without food **we must:**

**Always remember.**

For the mothers and fathers who were separated from their children and sold on the auction blocks **we must:**

**Always remember.**

For the freedom fighters such as Nat Turner who fought to free enslaved people; who gave their lives in the fight for freedom and justice **we must:**

**Always remember.**

For the **tens of thousands** of slaves who risked their lives in search of freedom on the Underground Railroad **we must:**

**Always remember.**

For freedom fighters such as Harriet Tubman, who escaped slavery and dedicated her life to returning to the South no less than **13** times freeing enslaved men women and children, **we must:**

**Always remember.**

For the white liberators like John Brown and President Abraham Lincoln who lived and died combatting the horrific institution of slavery **we must:**

**Always remember.**

To commemorate the centuries of suffering, the years of tears shed, the history of hearts broken, the brutality of blood spilled, and the grieving over lives lost because of slavery **we must:**

**Always remember.**

Yet, In the spirit of righteous remembrance imbued with love for our country that hasn't always loved its brothers and sisters of African ancestry, we have to **acknowledge that:**

In spite of slavery and despite its invidious offsprings: mass lynchings, convict leasing, black codes, lawful segregation, and institutional racism, African Americans have come a laudably long way.

- From our arrival on slave ships to our ascension to judgeships,
- From surviving the middle passage to thriving among the masses,
- From shackled in chains to creating societal change,
- From sitting in the back of buses to owning bus companies,
- From having no house to living in the White House,
- From painfully picking cotton, to proudly picking presidents,
- From adult males and females being disrespectfully called boy and girl to being respectfully presented as Mr. President and Madam Vice President,

The truth be told, although we have come a long way, we still have a way to go.

In closing, let us resolve that as we forge forward we will commemorate our past and embrace our destiny, always remembering the hardships people of African heritage have endured in tandem with the victories won in spite of the seemingly invincible challenges emanating from insidious slavery and its invidious progenies!

**Through it all we must:  
Always Remember.**

**We must:  
Always Remember.**

**We must:  
Always Remember.**





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# FIRST AFRICANS IN VIRGINIA

The first documented Africans in Virginia arrived here in Aug. 1619 on the *White Lion*, an English privateer based in the Netherlands. Colonial officials traded food for these “20 and odd” Africans, who had been captured from a Portuguese slave ship. Among present-day Hampton’s earliest African residents were Antony and Isabella. Their son, William, was the first child of African ancestry known to have been born in Virginia (ca. 1624). Many of the earliest Africans were held as slaves, but some individuals became free. A legal framework for hereditary, lifelong slavery in Virginia evolved during the 1600s. The United States abolished slavery in 1865.

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, 2015





# **Congressional Gold Medal for Enslaved Africans**

## **One Pager**

- This resolution would posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Africans and their descendants enslaved within our country from August 20, 1619, the date the 1<sup>st</sup> enslaved arrived in our country, to December 6, 1865, the date the enslaved were freed.
  - Congressional Gold Medals have been awarded posthumously in the past, to the Tuskegee Airmen and to the Servicemembers who died in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021.
  - Congressional Gold Medals have also been awarded to groups of individuals such as to the Navajo Code Talkers and to the surviving veterans of the American Civil War.
  - A Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to **4** surviving veterans of the American Civil War in 1956, **3** of whom were veterans of the Confederate Military.

# CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS WERE AWARDED A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL IN 1956 - WHAT CONGRESS DID FOR CONFEDERATE SOLDIER ENSLAVERS IT SHOULD DO FOR THE ENSLAVED

Sending Office: Honorable Al Green  
Sent By: [Aaron.Unlesty@mail.house.gov](mailto:Aaron.Unlesty@mail.house.gov)

## SUPPORT THE HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL FOR AMERICA'S ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONAL FATHERS, MOTHERS, AND CHILDREN

### THE ENSLAVED

**Original Cosponsors (26):** Maxine Waters, Bennie Thompson, Danny K. Davis, Jim McGovern, Brad Sherman, Barbara Lee, Emanuel Cleaver, Yvette Clarke, Hank Johnson, Gerry Connolly, Kweisi Mfume, David Cicilline, Pete Aguilar, Ted Lieu, Adriano Espaillat, Sylvia Garcia, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, Sheila Jackson Lee, Lizzie Fletcher, Joaquin Castro, Jasmine Crockett, Marc Veasey, Greg Casar

Deadline: February 1, 2023 – The first day of Black History Month

**ON JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 1956, CONGRESS (THE HOUSE AND SENATE) AWARDED A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO CONFEDERATE SOLDIER ENSLAVERS. HOWEVER, TO THIS DAY, CONGRESS HAS NEVER AWARDED A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE OVER 10 MILLION ENSLAVED MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN WHO TOILED FOR OVER 240 YEARS TO BUILD THE ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURAL FOUNDATION OF THE WEALTHIEST NATION TO EVER EXIST ON OUR PLANET.**

These foundational mothers and fathers of our country labored arduously constructing our cities, roads, bridges, and wells. They laboriously planted as well as harvested the food that fed our nation. They were the de facto producers of the cash crops that fueled our nation's foundational wealth. These enslaved human beings of African ancestry toiled as slaves without remuneration or recompense. Their humble hands were relied on for the construction of some of our nation's most renowned edifices and monuments including the White House, the Capitol Building, and the Washington Monument. In truth, their sacrificed lives provided the genesis of our nation's economic preeminence. These sacrificed human beings (men, women, and children) were the greatest contributors to the American foundational economy whose contributions are almost universally forgotten, under recognized, ignored, overlooked, and/or undervalued.

For these and countless other justifications, I am beseeching Congress to award the Congressional Gold Medal collectively to the human beings who are the foundational fathers, mothers, and children that toiled as slaves without

recompense or recognition for their unparalleled contribution to the infrastructural and economic development of the nation we enjoy today.

Awarding a Congressional Gold Medal to groups of individuals is not unprecedented, as a Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to Confederate soldier enslavers, the Tuskegee Airmen (antemortem and postmortem), the Navajo Code Talkers, and posthumously to the Servicemembers who perished in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021.

**IT IS MY BELIEF THAT MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN WHO SUFFERED A GREAT CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY, TOILING UNREMUNERATED AS SLAVES (MANY FOR THEIR ENTIRE WORK LIVES), ARE MORE DESERVING OF A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL THAN THOSE WHO SOLDIERED TO PRESERVE SLAVERY.**

**THE ZEITGEIST OF OUR TIME IMPELS THE INTRODUCTION OF THIS HISTORIC LEGISLATION. IF YOUR MEMBER WISHES TO BE RECOGNIZED AS A COURAGEOUS HISTORIC ORIGINAL COSPONSOR, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS GOOGLE FORM.** You can read the historic legislation [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact Aaron Linfesty in Representative Al Green's office at [Aaron.Linfesty@mail.house.gov](mailto:Aaron.Linfesty@mail.house.gov)

Sincerely,

Al Green  
Member of Congress  
**A proud descendant of enslaved Africans**



# Bill text of legislation passed into law awarding a Congressional Gold Medal to Confederate Soldiers

Public Law 730

CHAPTER 631

## JOINT RESOLUTION

To provide for a medal to be struck and presented to each surviving veteran of the War Between the States.

July 18, 1956  
[H. J. Res. 569]

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of the Treasury is authorized and directed to strike gold medals, with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary in honor of the last surviving veterans of the War Between the States who served in the Union or the Confederate forces. The medals shall be considered to be national medals within the meaning of section 3551 of the Revised Statutes of the United States. The President or any person designated by him is authorized to present a medal struck under this section to each surviving veteran of the War Between the States who served in the Union or the Confederate forces.

Veterans of War  
Between the  
States.  
Gold medals.

31 USC 368.

SEC. 2. Presentation shall be made to any surviving veteran of the War Between the States at his home or at any other suitable place with appropriate ceremonies.

Presentation.

Approved July 18, 1956.

# Resolution to Remove the name of Richard B. Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building

- Representative Al Green’s resolution would call on the Senate to remove the name of Richard B. Russell from the Russell Senate Office Building, and to revert to using the building’s original name, the Old Senate Office Building, until the Senate selects another honoree.
- In the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress H.Res. 920 has **46** original cosponsors.
- The Old Senate Office Building was named after **Richard Brevard Russell Jr., an unapologetic white supremacist.**
  - He claimed that America was “a white man’s country, yes, and we are going to keep it that way.”
  - During his first run for the state legislature, in 1920, he solicited the support and influence of every white voter and, if elected, pledged to serve them.
  - He not only successfully filibustered anti-lynching bills, but also voted against the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which he called “shortsighted and disastrous.”
  - He blocked bills to eliminate poll taxes.
  - He co-authored the “Southern Manifesto” to slow the integration of public schools after the Supreme Court unanimously ordered it in Brown v. Board of Education.
  - He was the chief legislative architect of the South’s bitter opposition to civil rights.

# Securities and Exchange Atonement Act

## One Pager

- Amends the Securities Act of 1934 to require issuers of securities to carry out a racial equity audit every 2 years, regarding:
  - Civil rights, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
  - **Direct or indirect ties to slavery.**
- Requires a report on the audit to the SEC and publicly, including:
  - **How issuer will reconcile profits from slavery.**
- Creates an Office of Reparations Programs at the Department of the Treasury.
  - To provide grants for down payments, startup capital, etc. to further racial equity.

# **Department of Reconciliation**

## **One Pager**

- Representative Al Green's Resolution would resolve to establish a cabinet level Department of Reconciliation to oversee the development and implementation of a comprehensive national strategy to eliminate racism and invidious discrimination.
  - To ensure the Department's work cannot be stopped through the appropriations process, the Department would have a budget equivalent to not less than **10%** of the Defense Department's budget.
  - The Resolution also resolves to declare an unconditional war on invidious discrimination in this nation.



To learn more about Representative  
Al Green's Conscience Agenda  
please contact the office at:

Houston (713) 383-9234 or  
Washington D.C. (202) 225-7508